

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1731A PRIVATE

J. A. SMITH

60TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

1ST OCTOBER, 1918

John Albert SMITH

John Albert Smith was born at South Yarra, Victoria in 1890. His parents were possibly John & Sarah Smith (nee Maskell). (Note: this is insufficient information to be 100% positive)

John Albert Smith was a 25 year old, single, Ship & Dock Painter from 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria when he enlisted on 7th March, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1731 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Miss Annie Donnelly, of 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria.

Private John Albert Smith was posted to “A” Company, 23rd Battalion at Royal Park on 11th March, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to “G” Company, 23rd Depot Battalion at Royal Park on 23rd March, 1916. Private Smith was transferred to 2nd Reinforcements of 59th Battalion at Broadmeadows, Victoria on 1st April, 1916.

Private John Albert Smith embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Port Lincoln (A17)* on 4th May, 1916 with the 15th Infantry Brigade, 59th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Reinforcements.

Private John Albert Smith was admitted to Government Hospital at Suez on 10th June, 1916 with Measles. He was discharged to duty on 26th June, 1916. Private Smith was taken on strength of 5th Divisional Details at Tel el Kebir on 9th July, 1916.

Base Records advised Miss A. Donnelly, 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria on 19th June, 1916 that No. 1731 Private J. A. Smith, 59th Battalion had been admitted to Hospital at Suez on 10th June, 1916 suffering from Measles – mild.

Private John Albert Smith was awarded 6 days confined to Camp on 10th July, 1916 for 1. Refusing to obey a lawful command of an N.C.O. 2. Using insulting language to an N.C.O. on Parade.

Private John Albert Smith embarked from Alexandria on 2nd August, 1916 on Troopship *Franconia* & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 8th August, 1916.

59th Battalion

The 59th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 21 February 1916 as part of the expansion of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits came from the veteran 7th Battalion, and the other half were fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 7th, the 59th was predominantly composed of men from rural Victoria. The battalion became part of the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private John Albert Smith was marched in to 15th Training Battalion in England on 21st August, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private John Albert Smith reported sick on 9th October, 1916 while posted to 15th Training Battalion Camp at Codford, Wiltshire, England. He was admitted to Camp Hospital at Codford on 12th October, 1916 & transferred to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 15th October, 1916 with V.D. & was discharged on 16th December, 1916. Total period V.D. – 63 days. Private Smith was marched in to 15th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 18th December, 1916 from Hospital.

Private John Albert Smith proceeded overseas via Folkestone on 31st December, 1916 on *Princess Henrietta*. He was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 1st January, 1917. Private Smith reported sick on 2nd January, 1917 & was admitted to 51st General Hospital at Etaples, France with V.D.G. He was discharged to Base Depot on 27th January, 1917. (26 days V.D.). Private Smith was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. on 27th January, 1917 from Hospital. He was marched out from 5th A.D.B.D. on 13th February, 1917 & was taken on strength of 60th Battalion in the Field on 17th February, 1917.

Private John Albert Smith was re-allotted a Regimental/Service number of 1731A (this occurred when there was a duplication of numbers).

Private John Albert Smith reported sick on 9th March, 1917. He rejoined 60th Battalion in the Field on 12th March, 1917.

Private John Albert Smith reported sick on 9th May, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 9th May, 1917 with scalded feet. A certificate from Commanding Officer, 60th Battalion stated the accident happened while washing clothes & the soldier was in no way to blame. He was transferred to Ambulance Train on 10th May, 1917 & was admitted to 14th General Hospital at Wimereux on 11th May, 1917. Private Smith was transferred on 13th May, 1917 & embarked from Boulogne, France on Hospital Ship *St Andrew* on 14th May, 1917 with Scalded feet.

Private John Albert Smith was admitted to 2nd London General Hospital, St. Mark's College, King's Road, Chelsea, England on 15th May, 1917 with scalded Feet. He was transferred to Holborn Military Hospital, Western Road, Mitcham on 8th June, 1917.

Private John Albert Smith was written up for an Offence while at Holborn Military Hospital, Mitcham, England – AWL (Absent without Leave) from 7 pm on 23rd June, 1917 to 7.40 pm on 25th June, 1917. This was admonished by Captain A. G. Hanks on 26th June, 1917 & he forfeited 3 days pay.

Private John Albert Smith was transferred to St. James Infirmary, Balham (3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth) on 5th July, 1917. He was discharged to Furlo from 3rd London, General Hospital, Wandsworth, London, England from 9th August, 1917 to 23rd August, 1917 & was then to report to Depot at Weymouth.

Private John Albert Smith was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 23rd August, 1917. He was marched out from No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 20th September, 1917 & was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire the same day.

Private John Albert Smith was medically classified as B1 A2 (fit for overseas training camp in three to four weeks) on 21st September, 1917 while posted at Hurdcott. He was medically classified as B1 A4 (fit for overseas training camp when passed dentally fit) on 26th September, 1917.

Private John Albert Smith was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 15th October, 1916 with V.D.

Private John Albert Smith was written up for an Offence - A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from noon on 18th October, 1917 until 6.40 am on 26th October, 1917. He was awarded 14 days Field Punishment No. 2 & was in custody awaiting trial for 2 days. He had a total forfeiture of 25 days' pay.

Private John Albert Smith was medically classified as B1 A4 on 30th October, 1917. He was marched out to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 4th December, 1917 & was medically classified as B1 A4 on 5th December, 1917. Private Smith was dentally fit on 12th December, 1917 & marched out to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 13th December, 1917 from No. 1 Command Depot, Sutton Veny.

Private John Albert Smith was marched in to 3rd Training Brigade, Codford, Wiltshire on 23rd December, 1917 from Overseas Training Brigade. He was on command at 4th Divisional Signalling School (15th Training Battalion) at Codford, Wiltshire, on 4th January, 1918.

Private John Albert Smith proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 23rd April, 1918 from 14th Training Battalion. He was marched in to New Zealand Infantry Base Depot on France on 24th April, 1918. Private Smith was marched out to his Unit on 26th April, 1918 & rejoined 60th Battalion in the Field on 3rd May, 1918.

Private John Albert Smith was wounded in action on 9th August, 1918. He was admitted to 8th Australian Field Ambulance on 9th August, 1918 with Shrapnel wounds to Back & Abdomen. Private Smith was transferred & admitted to 61st Casualty Clearing Station on 9th August, 1918 then transferred to 20th Casualty Clearing Station in France on 11th August, 1918 then transferred to Ambulance Train on 14th August, 1918. Private Smith was admitted

to 54th General Hospital on 15th August, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to Back (penetrating). He was invalided to England on 17th August, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Jan Breydel* with shrapnel wound/s to right of Abdomen.

60th Battalion

The 60th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 24 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 8th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. The majority of both groups were Victorians. The new battalion formed part of the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.....

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, but it was spared having to assault it. It did, however, defend gains made during the second battle of Bullecourt. Later in the year, the AIF's focus of operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium. The 60th's major battle here was at Polygon Wood on 26 September. This assault was a success - a product of the systematic way in which the early actions during the third battle of Ypres were fought.....

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This came in late March and the 5th Division moved to defend the sector around Corbie. During this defence, the 60th Battalion participated in the now legendary counter-attack at Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April. When the Allies launched their own offensive around Amiens in August, the 60th Battalion was amongst the troops in action on the first day.

By September 1918, however, the AIF was considerably under-strength and one battalion in each brigade was ordered to disband to reinforce the other three. The 60th Battalion was so ordered, and the men mutinied.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

From the War Diary of 60th Battalion:

The 60th Battalion were in Red Line in rear of Harbonnieres on 9th August, 1918. The Battalion Headquarters were located near Gillaucourt.

(Information on 60th Battalion's War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private John Albert Smith was admitted to Horton (County of London) War Hospital, Epsom, London, England on 17th August, 1918 with shrapnel wound/s to Abdomen. His condition was reported as seriously ill.

Base Records advised Miss A. Donnelly, 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria on 24th August, 1918 that Private J. A. Smith had been wounded. She was advised on 2nd September, 1918 that Private J. A. Smith had been admitted to Horton County of London War Hospital, Epsom, England on 17th August, 1918 suffering from gunshot wound to back, abdomen & was seriously ill.

Base Records advised Miss A. Donnelly, 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria on 30th September, 1918 that Private J. A. Smith was dangerously ill.

Private John Albert Smith died at 11.20 am on 1st October, 1918 at Horton (County of London) War Hospital, Epsom, London, England from wounds received in action - 1. G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Back (Septicaemia & Endocarditis) & 2. Septic Pneumonia.

A death for John A. Smith, aged 27, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Epsom, Surrey, England.

Base Records advised Miss A. Donnelly, 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria on 3rd October, 1918 that Private J. A. Smith's condition was slightly improving.

Private John Albert Smith was buried on 5th October, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 181643.

From the burial report of Private John Albert Smith - *Coffin was good. Polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the "Union Jack", and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths sent from relatives and friends of deceased. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the burial service conducted by Father Kelly, of the A.I.F., London. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives & friends present at the Funeral – Mrs Powles & Miss Powles, 52 Vicarage Road, Camberwell. Mrs Tolhurst & Mrs Oberst, 41 Osvis St, St Georges Rd, S.E. and No. 5954 Pte A Taylor, No. 1 Command Depot, Sutton Veny.

Base Records wrote to Miss A. Donnelly, 34 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Victoria, on 18th April, 1923 stating that the site No. 1731A Private J. A. Smith, 60th Battalion, grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row B Grave 10. *"While the actual place of burial remains unchanged the previous registration allotted thereto has been altered to conform with the uniform layout of this Cemetery."*

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. B. 10. Private John Albert Smith now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private John Albert Smith advised on 9th October, 1917 that his Will was in the possession of Mrs Powles, No. 3 Greese Street, Tottenham Court Road, London. Private Smith requested on 9th October, 1917 (on a second form) that all his personal estate be bequeathed to Miss Peggy Powles, of 52 Vicarage Road, Camberwell, London, England.

Base Records wrote to District Finance Officer, 3rd Military District on 1st May, 1923 asking *"...will you kindly let me know to whom the War Gratuity of the late No. 1731 Private J. A. Smith, 60th Battalion was allotted and also whether your files disclose the existence of any of the late soldier's blood relations, if so their names and addresses."*

A reply was received on 2nd May, 1923 advising *"No claim for War Gratuity has yet been lodged on account of the above named dead soldier."*

Base Records contacted Miss P. Powles, 52 Vicarage Road, Camberwell, London, S.E., England on 8th May, 1923 asking if she could furnish any information regarding the relatives of the mate No. 1731 Private J. A. Smith, 60th Battalion & the names & addresses. A list was included with the letter - father, mother, eldest brother, eldest sister etc. The letter continued explaining that the information was required in order to be able to dispose of the late soldier's War Medals, etc in accordance with the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed to the next-of-kin in the order outlined in the letter above.

Mrs R. J. Goodall (nee Powles) replied to Base Records with the following: "In answer to yours re relatives of the deceased, I am sorry that I am not in a position to assist you in this matter as I do not know of any relations of above now living. I know his mother and father are both dead. If there are any others living I know or have heard nothing of them. I can only refer you to the "Curator of Deceased Estates" in your City, who settle the matter of deceased estates with me. In the event of no relations being found the medal would be, I assure you, cherished by me, as I was his sole Legatee. But I sincerely hope and trust that you are successful in your quest. Please do not forget to write me again if I can possibly assist you."

Private John Albert Smith was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Private Smith's closest blood relation but as none could be located his Medals & Memorial Plaque & Scroll were sent to Untraceables on 2nd August, 1923

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Albert Smith – service number 1731A, of 60th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private J. A. Smith is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 171.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(76 pages of Private John Albert Smith's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

VICTORIA'S ROLL OF HONOR

429th CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

J. A. Smith, Fitzroy

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 16 September, 1918)

The 442nd CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian names:

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte J. A. Smith, Fitzroy

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 23 November, 1918)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

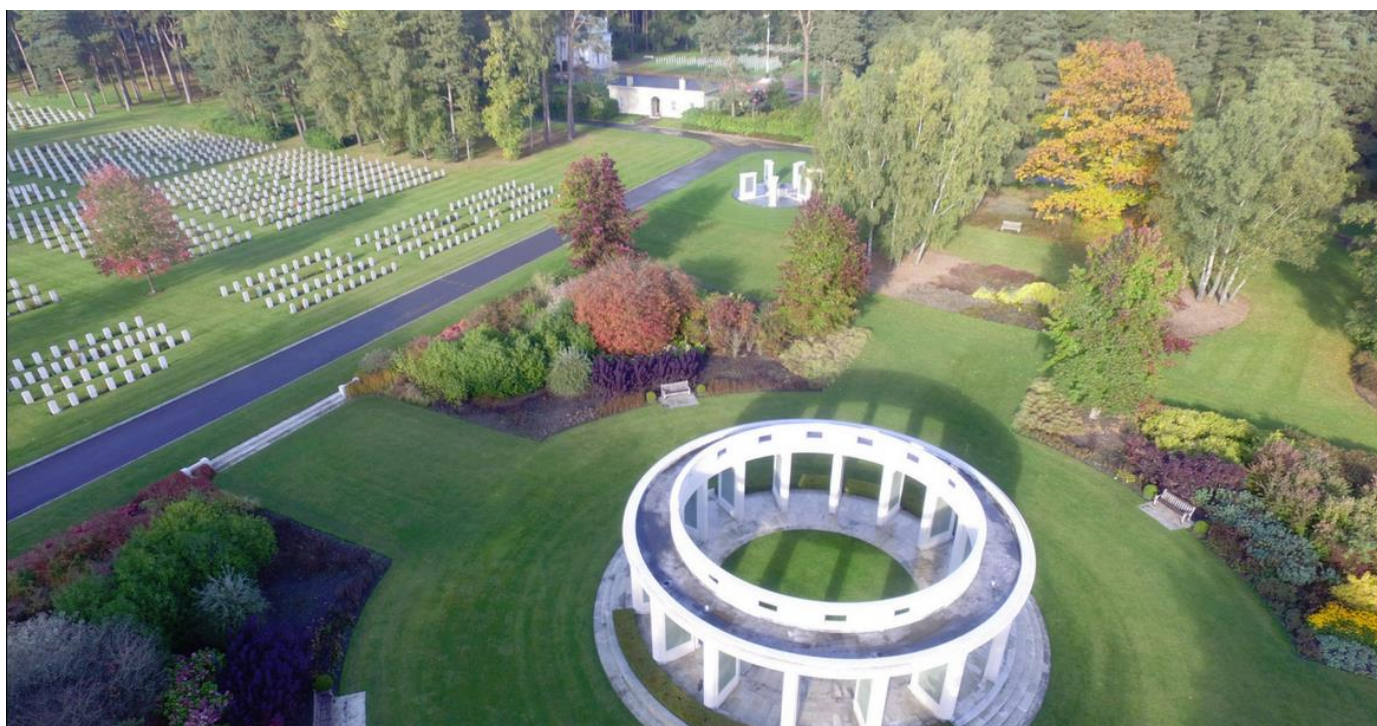
Private J. A. Smith does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



Brookwood Military Cemetery *(Photo from CWGC)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private J. A. Smith's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

